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MEDICAID NEWS

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Get Covered. Get in the Game.

New initiative promotes enrollment of eligible children in Medicaid and CHIP through school and community sports activities

WASHINGTON, DC - The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is launching the *Get Covered. Get in the Game*. initiative in seven pilot states across the country – Colorado, Florida, Maryland, New York, Oregon, Ohio and Wisconsin. The initiative is part of the *Connecting Kids to Coverage* effort, led by HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius, which calls on government and business leaders, health and human services providers, schools, the faith community, and those working with children in any setting to find and enroll roughly five million uninsured children in the U.S. who are currently eligible for Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP).

"Even as we move forward with health insurance reform for all Americans, we must not lose our momentum to insure kids now," said Secretary Sebelius.

Get Covered. Get in the Game. brings together coaches, schools, and communities to educate families with children who are eligible for Medicaid or CHIP about the immediate availability of children's health coverage programs. The National Council of Youth Sports estimates 44 million boys and girls participate in organized youth sports. Uninsured kids often miss out because they cannot afford the necessary physical often required to participate in youth sports or because their families are concerned they would be unable to pay for treatment if their kids get hurt.

"Healthy kids do better in school and in life because they are able to participate fully in activities that develop their bodies and their minds," Secretary Sebelius said. "Kids should not have to miss out on their favorite sports and other activities that get them moving because they lack health insurance coverage. With Medicaid and CHIP, eligible children can be covered both on and off the field."

Get Covered. Get in the Game. will provide coaches with information about CHIP and Medicaid and how families can get their eligible children enrolled. Coaches and others in the school community can serve as a resource to families to help ensure that children are linked to vital health benefits. CMS will support events launching this initiative, outreach to news outlets across the pilot states, coaches' trainings, and the placement of promotional materials at select youth sports events to help direct families to enrollment assistance.

For more information about enrolling in children's health insurance programs, please call 1-877-KIDS-NOW (1-877-543-7669) or visit www.InsureKidsNow.gov. Educational materials for coaches and parents are available on this site.